



# Focus

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## Burning In and Around Moses Lake and Ephrata

Things you should know before burning in and around the cities of Moses Lake and Ephrata.

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**Most burning is illegal! Residential burning and land clearing burning is not allowed in urban growth areas** with cities of over 10,000 after December 31, 2000. This includes both Moses Lake and Ephrata.

**Residential Burning:** means the outdoor burning of leaves, clippings, pruning and other yard and gardening origination on lands immediately adjacent and in close proximity to a human dwelling and burned on such lands by the property owner or his or her designee.  
WAC 173-425-030(22)

**Land Clearing Burning:** means the outdoor burning of trees, stumps, shrubbery, or other natural vegetation from land clearing projects (i.e., projects that clear the land surface so it can be developed, used in a different purpose, or left unused).

**Urban Growth Area (UGA):** to find out if you live in an UGA, please call your local planning department at **(509) 754-2011**.

### **What burning is allowed in the UGA's?**

The only outdoor burning allowed in Moses Lake and Ephrata is for the disposal of tumbleweeds blown by the wind, recreational fires\*, weed abatement fires (with a valid permit- available at Moses Lake Fire Departments), and agricultural burning (see Agricultural Burn Focus Sheet).

*\*Fires used for debris disposal are not considered recreational fires.*

### **What do I do with my yard waste?**

That same material that you previously may have burned, when chipped, composed or mulched can improve your garden, flowerbed, or lawn without polluting the air. For waste that cannot be recycled in that manner, consider hauling it to your local landfill. For information on landfills and composting in your area contact your county's solid waste office at (509) 754-6084.

### **If I'm not within the UGA areas of Moses Lake and Ephrata, can I burn?**

If you live outside the boundaries of the UGA it is legal to burn your natural vegetation, but there are alternatives to burning which you should consider. If you must burn the following guidelines must be followed:

- Only natural vegetation may be burned.
- For residential burning the pile must be less than 4'x3'x4' and you may burn only one pile at a time.
- Burning in barrels is **not** allowed.
- The smoke from your fire must not impact neighbors, and you must put it out if it does.
- The fire must not include materials hauled from another property, including properties within the urban growth area.
- Do not leave your fire unattended.
- No fires within 50' of structures.
- No burning after sunset.
- No outdoor fires during an air pollution episode and you must extinguish your fire immediately if one is called.

**Contact your local fire protection agency prior to burning to ensure that they have no fire safety burn restrictions in place.**

### **When should I burn?**

You should only burn when your smoke will not create a nuisance. Your smoke cannot impact roads, homes, population centers, or any other public areas. Ecology makes a daily smoke ventilation burn decision for agricultural burning and you are encouraged to call and utilize this information when deciding if it is a good day to burn. The toll-free number for this information is **1-800-406-5322**.

### **Why do I need to worry about smoke?**

We've known for a long time that smoke is bad for human health, whether it's from a cigarette or from an outdoor fire. When you burn, the resulting smoke can affect your neighbors in the entire surrounding area. If you see someone you think is burning illegally or if you are being impacted by smoke, please call Ecology's toll-free smoke complaint line at **1-866-211-6284**.

For more information on outdoor burning contact the following:

Department of Ecology  
Eastern Regional Office  
(509) 456-2926

Or visit our website at **[www.ecy.wa.gov](http://www.ecy.wa.gov)**.

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*If you have special accommodation needs, or require this document in alternative format, please call Judy Beitel at (360) 407-6878 (voice); or call (206) 407-6006 (TDD).*